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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted at William Rainey Harper College (WRHC) in Palatine, Illinois, to determine the reasons why nearly 16% of the students who applied to the college for fall 1990 did not register by the first week of classes. Results were compared to those of a similar study conducted of 1982 no shows. A sample of 300 of the 854 fall 1990 no-shows were selected for telephone interviews. Survey findings, based on a 76% response rate, included the following: (1) only 20% of respondents had decided definitely not to attend WRHC, down from 34% in 1982; (2) 3% of the students had enrolled after the first week of the fall 1990 semester; (3) 38% stated that they planned to attend WRHC within the next year, compared to 20% of the 1982 respondents; (4) one-sixth of respondents reported institutional barriers to enrollment, such as filled or canceled courses, time conflicts, or not enough transfer credit, compared to one-fourth in 1982; and (5) 31% of no-shows were attending other colleges, with 36% of those attending other community colleges, compared to 17% in 1982. Detailed results and the survey instrument are included. (MAB)

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Office of Planning and Research

William Rainey Harper College

A Study of Students Who Applied But Did Not Enroll at Harper for the Fall 1990 Semester

Volume XIX, No. 8
March 1, 1991

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ED348120

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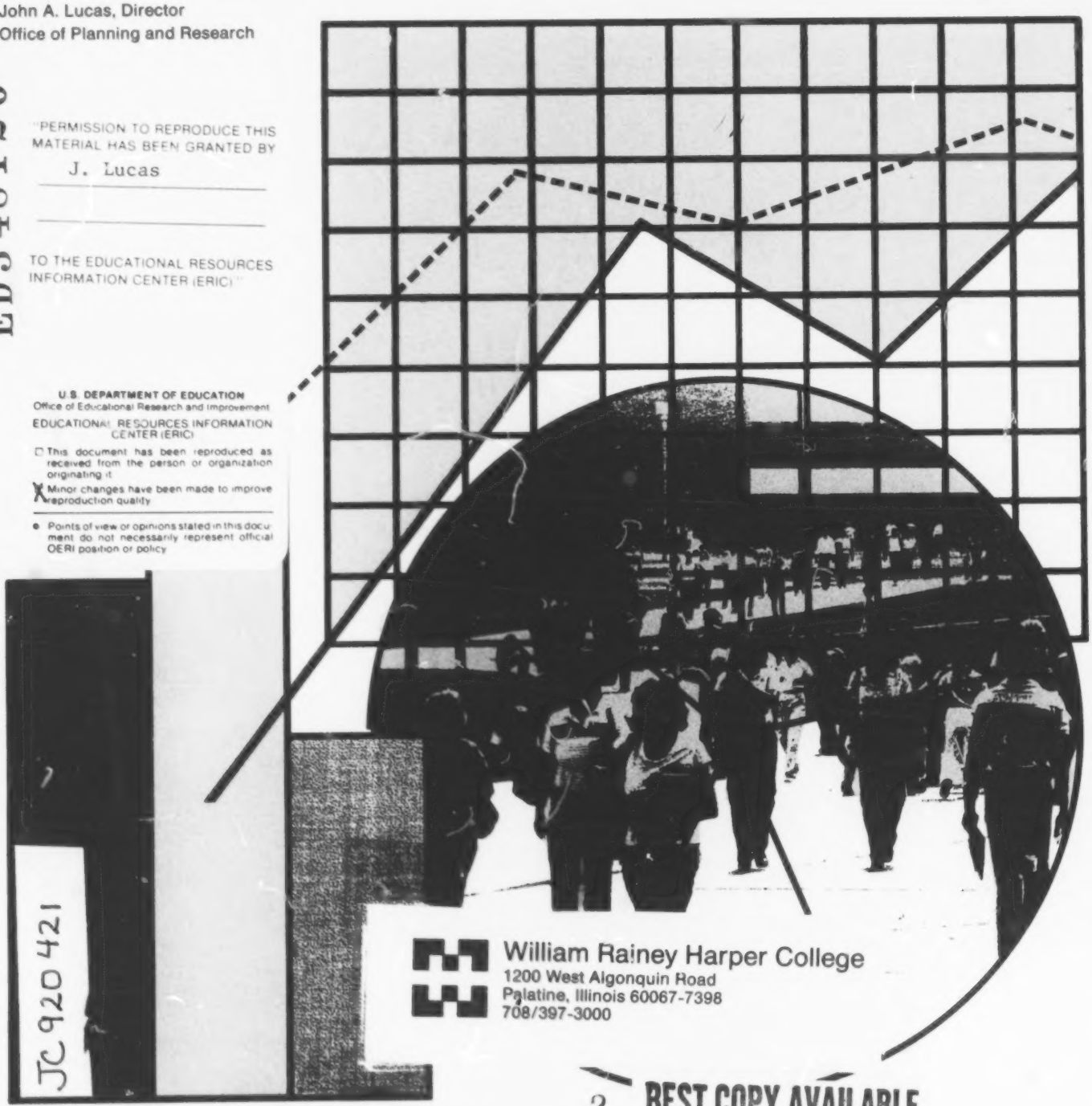

JC 920 421

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Purpose

The purpose of this study was to survey a sample of students who applied but did not enroll by the end of the first week of classes at Harper in the fall of 1990 and to determine the reason they did not enroll. The study also compared the results to a similar study conducted in 1982. The Director of Admissions had requested that the study be conducted.

Population Surveyed and Methodology

A list of students who had applied but did not enroll by the end of the first week of classes in the fall 1990 semester was produced by the Office of Admissions. The survey form shown in the appendix was developed jointly by the Office of Admissions and the Office of Planning and Research. The Office of Planning and Research drew a sample from the no-show population and conducted a telephone survey among the sample. Several attempts were made to reach the sample population. The population pool, sample and response rates are shown in the following table:

Survey Population Pool and Sampling Outcome

	1982	1990
Total Applications Received for Fall	6,596	5,434
Applicants Who Had Not Enrolled for Fall Semester by the End of the First Week of Classes	838	854
Percent of No-Show's	12.7	15.7
Number of No-Shows Sampled for Survey	200	300
Percent Sampled	23.9	35.1
Number of Completed Surveys Obtained	159	228
Response Rate	79.5	76.0

The percent of no-shows was slightly greater in 1990. The percent of the population sampled was much greater in 1990. The survey response rates ran between 75 and 80 percent for both years and this was adequate to insure the responders were representative of the survey population.

Discussion of Results

While there was little difference between 1982 and 1990 in terms of the percentage of no-shows, there was considerable difference in the make-up of the no-shows. Among the 1982 no-shows, 20 percent said they definitely plan to enroll at Harper within the next year but in 1990 this figure had risen to 38 percent. Moreover, in the fall semester of 1990, 3 percent had already enrolled after the first week. Similarly, in 1982, 34 percent indicated they definitely would not enroll at Harper in the future but in 1990 this figure had fallen to 20 percent. Thus in 1990 no-shows were much more likely to be deferred enrollments rather than no-shows.

There were also fewer Harper barriers reported among the no-shows in 1990 than in 1982. Barriers consisted of not being accepted in a program or awaiting acceptance in a program, courses filled, canceled, not offered at acceptable times, services for the disabled not available, information or forms not received, or did not award enough transfer credit. In 1982, one-fourth of the no-shows reported Harper barriers while in 1990 only one-sixth reported such barriers.

The most frequent reason given for not showing in both studies was the decision of 31 percent of each sample to attend another college. However, the mix of colleges chosen to attend was quite different. In 1982 only 17 percent of those deciding to attend another college chose another community college but by 1990 this percentage

Discussion of Results (continued)

had grown to 36 percent. The major reasons given for deciding to attend another college in 1990 were:

- Accepted in college of first choice --- 19
- Lived out-of-district and it was more convenient to attend local community college --- 10
- Not accepted or awaiting acceptance in limited enrollment program --- 7

Among the 1990 no-show sample, 45 percent reported they were very certain of attending Harper when they applied for Harper. This is consistent with the finding that 38 percent still definitely plan to attend Harper later while another 18 percent say they will probably attend Harper later.

A separate analysis was conducted among those twenty-six students who decided to attend another community college. Interestingly, when they applied to Harper, 42 percent sere certain they would attend Harper College. However, 31 percent said they definitely plan to attend Harper in the future and another 15 percent said they probably will attend Harper in the future.

Reason for Applicants not Enrolling at Harper

	Fall 1982		Fall 1990	
	N	PCT	N	PCT
Decided to attend another college	49	30.8	70.5	30.9
Had second thoughts/wants more time to think over career/educational plans	22	13.8	19.5	8.6
Decided to enroll at Harper, spring 1991	0	0	16.0	7.0
Financial problems	7	4.4	15.5	6.8
Decided to take full-time job instead of going to College	18	11.3	15.0	6.6
Was not accepted or still awaiting acceptance in specific program	8	5.0	14.0	6.2
Courses desired were filled, canceled, or not offered at right time	25	15.7	14.0	6.1
Personal problems	7	4.6	12.5	5.5
Waited too long to register/was out of town during registration	2	1.3	9.0	3.9
Enrolled later in fall	3	1.9	7.0	3.1
Enrolled this fall semester in second eight-weeks classes	0	0	5.0	2.2
Moved out of area	7	4.4	5.0	2.2
Did not have the right prerequisites	0	0	4.0	1.8
Missed the testing dates	0	0	4.0	1.8
Entered armed forces or reserves	3	1.9	4.0	1.8
Missed regular registration/enrolled in continuing education this fall	0	0	2.0	.9
Handicapped - services available were not adequate	0	0	2.0	.9
Did not receive forms or information soon enough to register	0	0	2.0	.9
Decided did not have time	0	0	2.0	.9
Lived too far away	3	1.9	2.0	.9
Foreign student waiting for a visa	0	0	2.0	.9
Was never notified of acceptance or did not receive information soon enough	1	.6	2.0	.9
Decided did not need specific course after all	0	0	1.0	.4
Will enroll at Harper in the fall of 1991	0	0	1.0	.4
Test score was too low to get into course desired	0	0	1.0	.4
Waiting for proper transcripts to arrive	1	.6	1.0	.4
Student found they were out-of-district and tuition was too high	0	0	1.0	.4
Only wanted to take placement test/did not want to enroll	0	0	1.0	.4
Harper did not accept enough of the transfer credits	0	0	1.0	.4
No specific reason given	0	0	1.0	.4
Would rather not discuss the matter	1	.6	1.0	.4
Did not like attitude of Harper staff	1	.6	0	0
Unhappy with assigned instructor	1	.6	0	0
	159	100.0	228	100.0

Summary of Reasons for Applicants not Enrolling for Fall of 1982 and 1990

Made another choice/other college/full-time job/armed services	69	43.4	90.5	39.7
Harper barrier/courses filled/not offered at right time/did not accept or notify student/ other problems	39	24.5	38.0	16.7
Undecided about future	26	16.4	21.5	9.4
Personal or internal problem/financial/personal/ job pressure/moved/other	25	15.7	54.0	23.7
Now enrolled or will shortly enroll at Harper	0	0	24.0	10.5
	159	100.0	228.0	100.0

Future plans with regard to Harper

Definitely plan to enroll at Harper within next year	32	20.3	82.0	38.0
Probably will enroll at Harper some time in the future	34	21.5	39.0	18.0
Not sure	39	24.7	52.0	24.1
Definitely will not enroll at Harper in future	53	33.5	43.0	19.9
	158	100.0	216.0	100.0

Other Colleges Attended - 1982

Southern Illinois - 5
University of Illinois- 3
Northeastern - 3
Triton College - 3
Northern Illinois - 3
Eastern Illinois - 2
Oakton College - 2
Kendall College - 2
McHenry College - 2
Bradley University
The Academy
Robert Morris Secretarial School
Illinois Institute of Technology
Elgin College
Augustana College
Joliet College
Indiana University
College of Lake County
Elmhurst College
Iowa State University
Morris
Western Michigan
Judson College
California State
College in Minneapolis (Not specified)
Rosary College
Mundelein College
Western Illinois
Prairie State
National College of Education
Rochester Institute of Technology
Not Specified - 1

Major Field at Other Colleges - 1982

Liberal Arts - 9
Business Administration - 9
Nursing - 4
Engineering - 4
Dental Hygiene - 3
Computer - 3
Fashion Merchandising - 2
Math - 2
Public Relations and Communications - 2
Secretarial - 2
Elementary Education - 1
Physics - 1
Hotel Management - 1
Pre-Health - 1
Did not specify - 5

SURVEY OF APPLICANTS WHO DID NOT ENROLL AT BEGINNING OF FALL 1990

Certainty of Enrolling at Harper When They First Applied	1990 N	1990 PCT
Very certain	99	44.6
Fairly certain	76	34.2
Not at all certain	47	21.2
	222	100.0

College Enrolled at Among Those Who Decided to Enroll at Another College - 1990

College of Lake County - 6
University of Illinois - 5
Oakton - 5
Northern Illinois - 5
Western - 4
Illinois State - 4
Elgin Community College - 4
Triton - 4
Loyola - 3
Northeastern - 2
Ray - 2
DePaul
Joliet
University of Wisconsin
University of Minnesota
DeVry
National Lewis University
Illinois Central
School Closer to Home
University of Cincinnati
College of DuPage
Washington, D. C.
Wabonsee College
Iowa Lakes
Augustana
ITT
University of Florida
Winona
Rosary
Morton
Wright
Arizona State
Northwestern
Moraine Valley
Pivot Point Beauty School
Conant High School
No response - 1

Major Field Among Those Who Decided to Enroll at Another College - 1990

Undecided - 7
Dental Hygiene - 6
Business - 5
Nursing - 5
General - 3
Computers - 2
Criminal Justice - 2
Education - 2
English - 2
Pre-Engineering
Horticulture
Biology
Psychology
Heating/Air Conditioning
Continuing Education
Office System
Social Science
Chemistry
Commercial Art
Fashion
Child Care
Architecture
Electronics
Automotive
Fire Science
Accounting
Pre-Med
Dietitian
No Response - 17

Reason Student Decided to Enroll
at Another College - 1990

- Decided to go to a four-year school - 7
- First choice of schools - 6
- Closer to home - 4
- Wanted to go away to school - 3
- Changed major - 2
- Waiting to be accepted in the Harper Dental Hygiene Program
- Joliet had a better program
- Football
- Never found out if I was accepted
- It will take a long time to finish at Harper
- Waiting to be admitted to Harper's Nursing Program
- I am in Oakton's District and Harper only takes two students from Oakton.
- Harper did not offer the classes I wanted and CLC is closer to my home.
- Just decided to go there.
- Going to CLC for 1990 and meant to apply for the fall of 1991.
- Was not accepted into Hygiene Program at Harper.
- Harper's classes were filled.
- Sister goes to Northern
- Wanted to get some classes out of the way at Elgin Community College because it is closer before attending Harper.
- parents decided she could go away to school.
- Plays basketball for Triton.
- Applied to both schools, wanted to go to Elgin.
- Decided to go to a specialized school.
- Was already attending Triton.
- Harper would not accept some of my transfer classes.
- Taking general courses before starting in Harper's Dental Hygiene Program.
- She moved with her father.
- Needed to make up some prerequisite classes before could apply.
- Program class.
- Decided this was a better school for electronics.
- Already attending - hopes to get into Dental Hygiene Program.
- She works for IPM and they will pay for the tuition for Western.
- Was closer to work.
- Times were not convenient.
- Could not get into district.

High Schools from Which They Graduated - 1990 Applicants

Wheeling	- 8	Liden	Lake Park
Conant	- 8	Curie	Driscole
Barrington	- 7	Mexico	Immaculata
Fremd	- 7	Mundelein	Manlius
Schaumburg	- 7	Forest View	Westlake
Maine South	- 7	Von Steuben	Regina Dominican
Prospect	- 5	Marillec	Morton Grove
Streamwood	- 5	Northshore Country Day School	Ft. Atkinson, Wisc.
Buffalo Grove	- 5		St. Peters Academy
Hoffman Estates	- 4	Bradford, Wisc.	Riverside/Brookfield
Glenbrook South	- 4	Grosse Point, Wisc.	Paducah Tilman
Palatine	- 4	New Trier West	Morton East
Elk Grove	- 4	North Chicago	Elysian Fields, Texas
St. Viator	- 4	St. Scholastica	Lake Zurich
Stevenson	- 3	New Hartford, N.Y.	India
Glenbard West	- 3	West Genesee, N.Y.	Trinity
Philippines	- 3	Highland	White Fish Bay, Wisc.

High School from Which They Graduated - Applicants 1990 (continued)

St. Charles - 3
Lincolnway - 3
Deerfield - 2
Evanston Twsp. - 2
Wisconsin - 2
Rolling Mdws. - 2
Hersey - 2
Niles West - 2
GED - 2
Carl Shurz - 2
Zion Benton - 2
Jacobs - 2
Ohio - 2
Gordon Tech - 2
De Paul Academy - 2
Maine West - 2
Addison Trail - 2
Keota, Iowa - 2
Christian Acad. - 2
Madonna
Jefferson
East Campus, McHenry
Jose Kizal
Elven H.S., Michigan
Iran
Arlington Heights
Englewood
Holy Cross
Barrett, Nebraska
Amboy
St. Gregory
Paul Robeson
Delito Juirec, Mex.
Liberia
New Trier East
Pistakee South
Proviso East
Rothsay, MN
Tri-Vally Downs. Ill.
Dundee
Morton West
Amundsen
Elgin
Mary Bradford, Kenosha
Larken
Englewood
Woodstock
Ocean Park, N.Y.
McArthur
Sycamore
Parker, H.S.
Fridley, Minnesota
Terry Grove
York
Antioch
Johnsburg
Grace Christian, P.I.
Privately at Harper
St. Mal
Hamburg, Iowa
Irving Crown
Winnebago, Ill.
Out-of-State
Arizona
Thornridge
Bogan
Maine East
Michigan
N. Farmington
Cary Grove
Ela Vernon
Belvedere
Aldren Hebron, Ill.
Hirsch
Round Lake
Crystal Lake
Libertyville

Year Graduated from High School - 1990 Applicants

1948	- 1	1976	- 2
1956	- 1	1977	- 6
1957	- 1	1978	- 2
1958	- 1	1979	- 6
1959	- 1	1980	- 4
1961	- 2	1981	- 4
1962	- 1	1982	- 7
1964	- 3	1983	- 8
1965	- 2	1984	- 5
1966	- 3	1985	- 10
1968	- 3	1986	- 9
1969	- 1	1987	- 7
1970	- 1	1988	- 22
1971	- 1	1989	- 21
1972	- 2	1990	- 61
1973	- 4	No Response	- 18
1974	- 3	Did not graduate	- 1
1975	- 3	Took GED	- 1

Additional Comments - 1990 Applicants

- As soon as she has taken all the courses needed to get into nursing here.
- Applied but never heard if she was accepted, so applied at another school.
- I just wanted to keep my options open.
- Difficult to enroll in Nursing Program. Transcripts sent to Harper were lost. No progress after many calls. Already has one year of nursing from another school and would be transferring into Harper.
- Harper told me to take the wrong class. Could not get in because I am in Oakton College District. I found this out after taking a year of classes at Harper. These classes did not transfer to Loyola.
- Registered for 8-week Paralegal Course now.
- Will attend if he can get info from Paralegal Department on Certificate Program.
- She would be very happy if someone could send a catalog of Harper, so she could take the courses she needed to take.
- Great school.
- Got frustrated - couldn't get the information needed from the College.

Analysis of Those Who Decided to Attend
Another Community College -- 26 Students

Certainty of Attending Harper When They Applied	N	PCT
Very Certain	11	42.3
Fairly Certain	10	38.5
Not at all certain	5	19.2
Total	26	100.0

Plans to Attend Harper in the Future		
Definitely plan to attend Harper in the future	8	30.7
Probably will be enrolling at Harper sometime in the future	4	15.4
Not sure	6	23.1
Definitely will not be planning to enroll at Harper in the future	8	30.8
Total	26	100.0

Comment From One Student
- Got frustrated -- couldn't get the information needed from the College.

High School From Which They Graduated

St. Charles -- 3	Maine South	Iran
Zion Benton -- 2	Addison Trail	Round Lake
Barrington -- 2	Stevenson	Jose Rizal
Paul Robeson	McArthur	Prospect
GED	Deerfield	Liberia
Niles West	Dundee	Morton West
Madonna	Woodstock	Gordon Tech
New Trier		

Year in Which Student Graduated

1974	1979 -- 3	1987 -- 2
1975	1980	1988 -- 4
1976	1982	1989
1977	1983	1990 -- 8
		No Response

Those Who Enrolled in a Community College

College	Major
Oakton Community College	Chemistry
Oakton Community College	Not Specified
Oakton Community College	Nursing
Oakton Community College	Fire Science
Oakton Community College	Office System
College of Lake County	Dental Hygiene
College of Lake County	Criminal Justice
College of Lake County	Dental Hygiene
College of Lake County	Dental Hygiene
College of Lake County	General
College of Lake County	Not Specified
Joliet Junior College	Horticulture
Moraine Valley	Not Specified
Elgin Community College	Undecided
Elgin Community College	Nursing
Elgin Community College	Nursing
Elgin Community College	Dental Hygiene
Morton	Heating and Air Conditioning
Triton Community College	Dental Hygiene
Triton Community College	Architecture
Triton Community College	Nursing
Triton Community College	Commercial Art
Waubonsee Community College	Child Care
Iowa Lake Community College	Undecided
College of Dupage	Nursing
Wright	English

Reasons Chose Other College Rather Than Harper College

- No response -- 5
- Was closer to work
- Already attending - hope to get into Dental Hygiene Program
- Times were not convenient
- Could not get into District
- Waiting to be accepted in the Harper Dental Hygiene Program
- Joliet had a better program.
- Waiting to be admitted to Harper's Nursing Program.
- Harper did not offer the classes desired and College of Lack County is closer to home.
- Needed to make up some prerequisite classes before applying.
- Closer to home
- Student is going to College of Lake County for 1990, and meant to apply for Fall of 1991.
- Was not accepted into the Hygiene Program at Harper.
- Harper's classes were filled.
- Applied to both schools - wanted to go to Elgin.
- First choice of schools.
- Plays basketball for Triton.
- Harper too far from home.
- Wanted to get some classes out of the way at Elgin because it is closer before attending Harper.
- Harper would not accept some of my transfer classes.
- Was already attending Triton.
- Taking general courses before starting in Harper's Dental Hygiene Program.

A P P E N D I X

- Telephone Survey Instrument

SURVEY OF APPLICANTS WHO DID NOT ENROLL

FALL -- 1990

1. From what high school did you graduate? _____

2. What year did you graduate? _____

3. Why didn't you enroll at Harper in the Fall of 1990?

_____ A. Went to another college.

Specify college _____ Major field _____

Why did you elect to go there rather than Harper College?

_____

_____

_____ B. Decided to take full-time job instead of going to college.

_____ C. Financial problems.

_____ D. Personal problems.

_____ E. Still enrolled in high school.

_____ F. Moved out of the area.

_____ G. Was not accepted in the specific program applied for.

_____ H. The courses desired were filled.

_____ I. Have had second thoughts about my educational and career plans -- want more time to rethink them.

_____ J. Did enroll in a course, but then withdrew. Why? _____

_____

_____

_____ K. Semester started too early.

_____ L. Job change to out of district location.

_____ M. Other (specify) _____

_____

4. How certain were you of your plans to attend Harper when you applied?

_____ A. Very certain.

_____ B. Fairly certain.

_____ C. Not at all certain.

5. Do you plan to enroll at Harper in the future?

_____ A. Definitely plan to enroll at Harper within the next year.

_____ B. I probably will be enrolling at Harper sometime in the future?

_____ C. I am not sure.

_____ D. I definitely will not be enrolling at Harper in the future?

6. Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

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